

Castro Worries U.S. and Soviet

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News Analysis

Fidel Castro considers himself a good Marxist-Leninist but in fact he is a most undisciplined Communist. And therefore he is a problem of a special sort for both the Soviet Union and the United States.

This is one of the points evident in the Cuban Pre-

mier's lengthy interview with French newspaperman Jean Daniel, published yesterday in *The Washington Post*.

Castro worries about a Moscow-Washington deal over his head. Moscow worries that he will get off the Soviet reservation. Castro hopes for a deal with the United States. And Washington worries about Castro's effect on the coming Presidential election.

Three years ago when Castro and Soviet Premier Khrushchev were both at the United Nations, a member of Khrushchev's entourage characterized Castro to me as "a romantic." In Communist lingo such a man is one who has swallowed whole the Marxist-Leninist dogma but who has a romantic rather than a realistic attitude toward its application in the world of Realpolitik.

To Daniel, Castro termed the Kennedy Alliance for Progress "a good idea"—something no disciplined Communist would say—which will come to naught because "the few liberal Presidents" who support it are swept out of office (as Juan Bosch of the Dominican Republic) or transformed (as Romulo Betancourt of Venezuela).

A man who can talk this way can go on, as Castro did, and imply that he could make a deal with the late President Kennedy. Castro spoke of "a basis of under-

standing" without spelling it out but he implied it called for an end to his attempts at Latin-American subversion in exchange for an end of the American blockade of Cuba and of subversion efforts.

The implications in Daniel's account that both Mr. Kennedy and Castro considered the newsman a sort of intermediary led White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger yesterday to deny that Daniel was a Kennedy "messenger."

However, Mr. Kennedy did use newsmen for such work and Castro clearly figured Daniel was just such a man. The disclosure of the two interviews now has put the new President in a difficult spot. He already had called for a review of the Cuban problem.

Mr. Kennedy expected the Republicans to use the Cuban issue against him next year just as he had used it, and very successfully, against Richard M. Nixon in 1960. President Johnson hardly could be expected to show any sign of compromise with Castro at this point, if ever.

But is compromise in fact possible? Mr. Kennedy had declared publicly that a Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba was "incompatible with the inter-American system" and the Punta del Este Conference had agreed.

Castro told Daniel that Cuba had proved its policies were not always the same as those of the Soviet Union. He conceded that if Daniel's

account of Mr. Kennedy's feelings were correct then "there is no solution." But he continued to hope. That is where it is likely to remain for the time being at least.

As to Khrushchev, Castro makes evident that the Soviet leader worked him over hard during his visit to Moscow. Khrushchev sought to prove to Castro that he was not more conciliatory toward the United States than Josef Stalin had been—the Chinese Communist contention to the contrary notwithstanding.

From this one can see Khrushchev's fear that Castro might go off the deep end and join the Chinese.

Khrushchev's agents have hinted to the United States that a deal with Castro should be possible, even implying that at some point they might help it come about by removing from Cuba the rest of the Soviet forces.

Exactly what the late President had in mind in his talk with Daniel, which he knew would be passed on to Castro, we cannot now be certain. We do know that Mr. Kennedy was dissatisfied with the current state of Cuban-American relations—but what to do about it?

The Daniel interviews, then, show, that there may be some limited area of maneuver. But with a new President and an oncoming election the possibilities of much maneuvering appear slight indeed.

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Salinger Disputes Castro Story

White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger yesterday denied a report attributed to Fidel Castro that President Kennedy hinted to Russia the United States might invade Cuba.

Castro was quoted by French journalist Jean Daniel as saying President Kennedy told Soviet Premier Krushchev's son-in-law, Alexi I. Adzhubei, editor of Izvestia, that Mr. Kennedy, in effect, advised Russia not to intervene and reminded Russia that the

United States did not intervene in the 1956 Hungarian revolt.

Salinger said he attended the Kennedy-Adzhubei luncheon at the White House in January 1962 and that Mr. Kennedy flatly denied that the United States intended to invade Cuba.

The President's mention of Hungary was to indicate how important the Soviet Union considered Hungary at the time of the rebellion, Salinger said.

Daniel had an off-the-record meeting with Mr. Kennedy Oct. 24, which he reported in detail in an article for L'Express and the New Republic. The article was reprinted in The Washington Post yesterday.

Daniel later flew to Cuba to interview Castro, and reported to him his conversation with Mr. Kennedy.

Salinger said he was sure Mr. Kennedy did not intend Daniel to act as a messenger to Castro.